

Building the capacity of teachers for supporting 21st-century learning

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There is a clear mandate for teachers to continuously improve and update their knowledge and skills, in order to ensure they prepare students for learning in the 21st century.

This cannot happen without high quality professional development (PD) that respects what teachers already know and do, and provides real guidance for how they might do things differently. Professional development is widely embraced as necessary for enhanced teaching, but not all PD comes with powerful evidence of positive impact (Gore et al., 2015). Quality Teaching Rounds (QTR) provides strong evidence.

Quality Teaching Rounds combines key features of effective PD, including professional learning communities (PLCs): a form of instructional rounds, with the Quality Teaching (QT) model of pedagogy to substantively guide collaborative analysis of practice.

The QT model, developed by Jenny Gore and James Ladwig in 2003, has three dimensions and 18 elements, representing a synthesis of robust research that empirically links the qualities of pedagogy in the model to improved student learning; namely, pedagogy that promotes high levels of intellectual quality, establishes a high-quality learning environment, and generates significance by making learning more meaningful to students. It is applicable across subjects and stages, offering a coherent vision of pedagogy (NSWDET, 2003).

Quality Teaching Rounds was first conceptualised by Julie Bowe and Jenny Gore in 2007. It involves teachers working in PLCs to reflect on their classroom practice through the lens of the QT model. This teacher-led process builds capacity for quality teaching with novice and experienced teachers alike (Gore & Rickards, forthcoming). Following a set of protocols and adhering to essential features of the approach, one PLC member teaches a lesson, observed by all others. The lesson is coded individually and then collaboratively analysed, using the shared language of the model.

This poster presentation graphically highlights evidence from several research studies conducted by the University of Newcastle over the past 15 years. The strong body of evidence demonstrates that QTR has positive effects because, not despite, the fact that it brings teachers together across stages and subjects

(Gore & Rosser, forthcoming). The 2015 randomised controlled trial (RCT) demonstrated positive effects of QTR on teaching quality, teacher morale, and teaching cultures across a range of primary and secondary schools in diverse communities (Gore et al., 2016).

Currently, the researchers are embarking on a ground-breaking program of research, Building Capacity for Quality Teaching in Australian Schools, concluding in 2022. This research employs mixed methods, including RCTs, to test the impact of QTR on student outcomes, sustainability of effects, efficacy of trainer and digital delivery, and transition to new jurisdictions. Teachers across Australia have access to two-day workshops, equipping them with the evidence base and knowledge to implement QTR in their schools.

The QTR approach to teacher development will support thousands of teachers across Australia to engage in powerful professional work with colleagues to refine their teaching, placing them in a strong position to build their capacity for quality teaching while enhancing student learning into the future.

References

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